

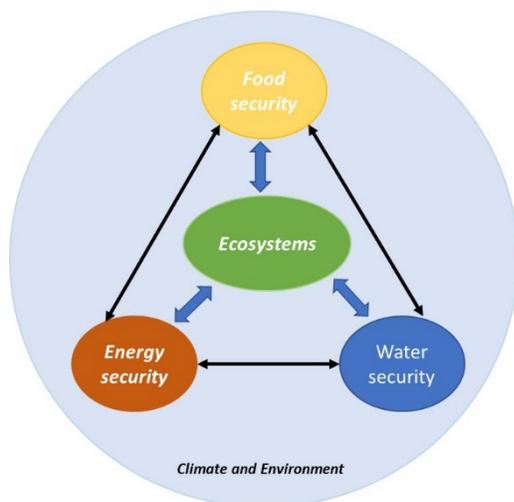
**SUMERNET Annual Research and Policy Forum**  
**Leveraging Nexus for Transboundary Cooperation in the Lancang–Mekong Region**  
 09:00-17:30, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022 (Bangkok time/Indochina Time)  
 (version: 8 November 2022)

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**Rationale:**

Water, food, energy, and ecosystems are essential for human wellbeing and securing access to these resources in a sustainable manner is fundamental to the continued development that is required to meet all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Sectoral policies regarding water, food, energy, and ecosystems have significant impacts on one another. Policies and actions of one sector often cause serious but overlooked externalities for other sectors at local, national, regional, and global scales. This is especially the case in the context of increasing resource scarcity and associated competition for these vital resources.

Against the backdrop of increasing vulnerability due to climate change, it is even more urgent and imperative to coordinate among the water, food, energy, and environment sectors. The **nexus approach** to managing interlinked resources seeks to enhance water, food, and energy security by reducing trade-offs, building synergies, and improving governance while protecting ecosystems. Such an approach helps reconcile different sectoral objectives and supports progress towards the closely interlinked SDGs at the national and regional levels.



In transboundary settings, such as the Lancang–Mekong region addressing trade-offs and externalities between countries can foster trust, be a lever for regional development and help mitigate potential conflicts. A nexus approach to managing common resources could enhance water, food, energy, and environment security in riparian countries, leveraging on regional complementarities, and improving natural resource governance.

Using the nexus approach, Sustainable Mekong Research Network (SUMERNET) Research and Policy Forum 2022 will highlight the competing demands within water, food, energy, and ecosystems and identify pathways for deepening engagement on the interlinked issues for greater cooperation in the Mekong region. The forum will foster

transboundary dialogue across the nexus sectors – water, food, energy, and ecosystems.

SUMERNET is organizing an event “*Leveraging Nexus for Transboundary Cooperation in the Lancang–Mekong Region*” as part of the Annual Meeting 2022.

SUMERNET comprises of 500 network members (SNMs) from the countries within and outside the six Lancang–Mekong Region and the Steering Committee (SSC) representing network members with the technical support of the SUMERNET Secretariat hosted at Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) Asia Centre, Bangkok.

Objectives of the Research and Policy Forum are:

1. To facilitate knowledge exchange among academics, practitioners, and policymakers in the Lancang–Mekong Region on the implementation of a nexus approach to tackling water, food, energy, and ecosystems security in a changing climate.
2. To enhance understanding of nexus approaches to foster transboundary cooperation in the Lancang–Mekong Region.
3. To identify gaps in knowledge and devise strategies for collaborative research and actions across the domains of water, energy, food, and ecosystems in the Lancang–Mekong Region.
4. To identify policy gaps and opportunities in the consideration of the nexus approach in the Lancang–Mekong region.

**The Research and Policy Forum** will provide a platform for both researchers and practitioners from the upper and lower countries of the Lancang–Mekong Region to exchange knowledge and experiences on various interconnected issues related to water, food, energy, and ecosystems. The aim is to assess the current state of knowledge and the emerging lessons/learnings that can inform coherent policy making that considers the interconnectedness of the domains of water, food, energy, and ecosystems for securing the sustainability and well-being of the Lancang–Mekong region.

This forum will facilitate a dialogue among policymakers, researchers, and practitioners to explore how regional policy priorities have taken or have not taken into consideration the criticalities emerging in the Lancang–Mekong area with regards to management of water, food, energy, and environment sectors, with the goal of reducing the negative consequences of development on overall food and water security in the region and providing livelihood sustenance. The discussion aims to identify gaps and opportunities in the current policy framework and bring together ideas from the networks on how to cooperate to achieve water, food, energy, and ecological security in the Lancang–Mekong region.

**Date and time:**

Research and Policy forum: **10<sup>th</sup> November 2022, 09:00 -17:30 hr. (Bangkok time/Indochina Time)**

**Mode of participation:**

All participants are encouraged to participate onsite but online participation is also possible.

- Onsite participation: **Pullman Bangkok Hotel G, Bangkok, Thailand**
- Online platform will be held through **Zoom**. Registration link for online participants: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYkc-6grD8iE93HztqzpCohFFrKq9ZTabjb>

**Forum participants:**

- Network members of SUMERNET and SUMERNET Youth Network (SYN)
- Representatives from the regional cooperation mechanisms e.g., LMC (Lancang Mekong Cooperation) Water Centre, MRC (Mekong River Commission), ADB (Asian Development Bank) GMS (Greater Mekong Subregion) and ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)
- Representatives from the governmental agencies related to water, environment, energy, agriculture from the Lancang–Mekong Countries
- Representatives from Sida, other donors and development agencies
- Media

- Other researchers, practitioners and policymakers from the region who are working or have an interest in the nexus approach to address the challenges spanning water, food, energy, and ecosystems and wish to participate in the forum

**About SUMERNET:**

Since its founding in 2005, Sustainable Mekong Research Network (SUMERNET), a regional research network, has been supporting policy-relevant research and outreach activities to inform and engage decision-makers, planners, and stakeholders, bringing together research partners engaged in sustainable development in the six countries of the Mekong Region: Cambodia, China (specifically Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region), Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. Within this context, it pursues an evolving agenda in response to questions and policy issues that arise in the region. With continued funding support of the Embassy of Sweden through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), SUMERNET 4 All (2018-2023), current phase of SUMERNET has the focus on reducing water insecurity for all in the region.

SUMERNET is guided by SUMERNET Network Members (SNMs), who collectively deliberate on strategic issues that have implications for the whole network. The SNMs delegate their authority in taking strategic decisions to SUMERNET Steering Committee (SSC). The SUMERNET Secretariat (SS) hosted at the Asia Centre of Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) provides the day-to-day management, coordination, and technical support to the network under the direction of the SSC. The network currently consists of more than 500 members who are engaged with various activities under SUMERNET.

**Draft agenda:**

Time/Duration	Agenda	Who
Overall facilitators: Sushmita Mandal (SUMERNET Research for Policy and Practice Coordinator), Ridhi Saluja (SUMERNET Multi-stakeholder Engagement Coordinator) & Hermes Huang (Insight Pact) Rapporteur – SUMERNET Fellows/Representatives from SUMERNET Youth Network		
<b>08:30 – 09:00</b>	<b>Registration</b>	<b>Unchulee, Bouanong</b>
09:00 – 09:30	<p><b>Session 1:</b> Welcoming and opening remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Surasri Kidtimonton, The Secretary General Office of the National Water Resources (ONWR), Thailand</li> <li>• Dr. Eren Zink, First Secretary, Senior Research Advisor, Development Cooperation Section, Embassy of Sweden, Thailand</li> <li>• Prof. Dr. Chantana Wungaeo, Chairman of SUMERNET Steering Committee (SSC) and Chulalongkorn University.</li> </ul> <p>Introduction to SUMERNET, Research-Policy Forum and participants</p>	<p>Moderator: Hermes Huang</p> <p>Sushmita Mandal (SUMERNET Research Coordinator)</p>
09:30 – 10:40	<p><b>Session 2:</b> <b>PANEL 1</b> <i>Revisiting the Nexus approach: Assessment of knowledge, opportunities, and the way forward</i></p>	Moderator: Sushmita Mandal

Time/Duration	Agenda	Who
	<p>Setting the Context: What have been the achievements of the nexus approach in the region? (10 minutes)</p> <p>Panelists –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Eren Zink, First Secretary, Senior Research Advisor, Development Cooperation Section Embassy of Sweden</li> <li>• Prof. Dr. Li Hao, Hubei Economics University, People’s Republic of China (online)</li> <li>• Karen Delfau, International Water Centre Alumni Network (IWCAN)</li> <li>• Mr. Stefano Zenobi, Data and Transparency Specialist, USAID Mekong for the Future, WWF Greater Mekong</li> </ul>	<p>Dr. Louis Lebel (USER Director, SUMERNET Water Insecurity Advisor)</p>
<b>10:40 – 11:00 Group photo followed by Coffee Break</b>		
<p>11:00 – 12:15</p>	<p><b>Session 3:</b> <b>PANEL 2</b> <i>Regional cooperation mechanisms that facilitate an effective nexus approach to address insecurity issues of water, energy, and food in the region</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Tong Yuchen, Assistant Engineer, Lancang-Mekong Water Resource Cooperation Centre (LMC Water Centre), People's Republic of China (online)</li> <li>• Dr. John Dore, Lead Advisor, Mekong Australia Partnership - Water, Energy and Climate Change (MAP-WEC), Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australian Embassy, Thailand</li> <li>• Ms. Jian Wang (Tina), Program Manager of the Sustainable Energy &amp; Environment Program Department, Mekong institute (MI)</li> <li>• Dr. Wijarn Simachaya, Secretary-General of Thailand Business Council for Sustainable Development (TBCSD), Member of Thailand National Water Resources Committee, and President of Thai Environment Institute (TEI).</li> <li>• Ms. Chawee Wongprasittiporn, Expert of Strategy, Office of the National Water Resources (ONWR), Thailand</li> </ul>	<p>Moderator: Mr. Stefan Bößner (SUMERNET Multistakeholder Engagement Assistant)</p>
<b>12:15 – 13:15 Lunch Break</b>		
<p>Overall facilitators: Dr. Ridhi Saluja, Stefan Bößner (SUMERNET Multistakeholder Engagement Assistant) &amp; Hermes Huang Rapporteurs: SUMERNET Fellow/Youth Network</p>		
<p>13:15 – 14:15</p>	<p><b>Session 4:</b> <i>Operationalizing the Nexus from the ground up</i> This will include two parallel breakout groups that will focus on specific themes as mentioned in the title of each session. The breakout rooms will be provided instructions on specific questions that they would discuss on the theme and share it back on the plenary</p> <p><b>Group 1</b> Interconnections between ecosystem health, food, and water security</p>	<p>Moderators: Ridhi, Stefan &amp; Hermes</p>

Time/Duration	Agenda	Who
	Group Discussions, report back, and Q&A ----- <b>Group 2</b> Interconnections between ecosystem health, food, and energy security; Group Discussions, report back, and Q&A	
14:15 – 14:45	Key messages from the group discussions	Ridhi, Stefan & Hermes
14:45 – 15:45	<b>Session 5:</b> <b>PANEL 3</b> <i>Research–Policy–Media Interface: Leveraging the Nexus to foster transboundary cooperation</i>  Panelists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Pichamon Yeophantong, Centre for Future Defence and National Security, Deakin University, Canberra</li> <li>• Dr. Francis X Johnson, Senior Research Fellow, SEI</li> <li>• Dr. Bach Tan Sinh, Institute of Policy, and Management (IPAM), VNU Hanoi, University of Social Sciences and Humanities</li> <li>• Ms. Tipakson Manpati, Mekong Commons web manager</li> </ul> Discussion and Q & A	Moderator: Dr. Pheakkdey Nguon (SSC member)
15:45 – 16:00	<b>Session 6:</b> Key Takeaways from the Research and Policy Forum	Sushmita & Hermes
16:00 – 16:10	<b>Session 7:</b> Vote of Thanks and Closing Remarks	Dr. Kittima Leeruttanawisut, SUMERNET Steering Committee (SSC) member
16:10 – 17:30	<b>Session 8: Networking Session over Coffee</b>	All participants
<b>End of SUMERNET Annual Research and Policy Forum 2022</b>		